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A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

Memory's Tribute.

It was in the old, the dying year,
When Summer's green, and Autumn's grey,—
Nature's, time-worn and faded gear—
For Winter's garb were thrown away;
That, flushed and pale alternate, lay
Upon her couch from day to day,
A fair, yet fading form of clay,
Greedy Consumption's costly prey.

We talked with her of death and life,—
Of death by sin, and life by grace;
While, index of the mental strife,
The tear-drops trickled down her face.
We watched with anxious care that gloom
That rested on her features now,—
Now dimming their supernal bloom;
Then shadowing her marble brow.

And oh! how earnestly we pled
With Him who "came to seek and save
The lost," and "raise to life the dead,"
That He would rescue from the grave
Of sin, and death's eternal gloom,
This one, whose symptoms seemed to say,
"This hectic flush, this transient bloom,
Will soon forever fade away."

The days still short and shorter grew,
Too faint to thaw what night had froze;
And bald December, shivering, threw
His death-pall on the year's repose.
And Emma's breath grew shorter too,
She breathed more faintly, spoke more low,
And quicker chased the hectic hue,
The marble pallor of her brow.

But while earth's light more feeble grew,
And sadly we began to know
That shortly we must bid adieu,
And bury her beneath the snow,—
Heaven's light did dawn, and though each beam
Seemed but the effluence of its ray,
Yet on her soul with growing gleam,
Arose that harbinger of day.

The time seemed drawing still more nigh
When she must ford Death's chilling stream,
And things unseen, unfancied, try,
Awaking from earth's shadowy dream.
Friends gently raise and bathe her head,
And hush the children's lightest play;
And move more softly round the bed,
Where weary, weak, and worn, she lay.

But through the stillness and alarms
Where Death's pale phantoms came and went,
Unseen, unheard, angelic forms
Seemed hovering, on their mission bent.
They gently soothe the sufferer's pain,—
Fan with their wings her burning face,—
Point to the stinged monster, slain
Through the Redeemer's wondrous grace.

Then wiping off the last warm tear,—
Through Christ, the Saviour's boundless love,
They raise her hopes, they calm her fear,
And point her to her home above.
The uncomplaining sufferer sleeps,—
The patient Emma's pains are o'er,
The grave in trust her body keeps,
The soul in bliss dwells ever more.

Wolfville, Jan., 1861.

IOA.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD IV.

From A. D. 1809 to A. D. 1821.

LETTER XXVI.

ACCOUNT OF THE ASSOCIATION IN 1814 CONCLUDED.
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BODY AT ITS MEETINGS IN
1815, 1816, 1817, and 1818.

My Young Friend,

At the Association in 1814 the introductory sermon was preached by Thomas Ansley. Edward Manning was moderator; William Chipman, Clerk. The church at Fredericton was received into the Association. The additions amounted to 133; but as 61 were added to the Chester church, and 25 to that at St. John, there were but 47 additions in the other twenty-two churches; and in one of them there was a serious loss, the church at Salisbury reporting twenty-five exclusions.

The whole number of exclusions in these twenty-two churches was fifty-four, and there were twelve dismissions and eleven deaths, so that they presented a decrease of thirty members. Perhaps it was a knowledge of these facts that induced Edward Manning to write as follows in the Circular Letter:—

"We cannot but observe to you, that while there is so much practical infidelity abounding in the land it becomes every lover of the Lord Jesus to show themselves on the Lord's side. O brethren, let closets be frequented. Be sure to keep up family worship; let not business, company, or any thing else prevent the worship of God in your houses. For if this be the case, what is the consequence? Your children may be literally said to be brought up for the devil. Be careful so to conduct that the children of God may not be grieved. Form no connexions, attend to no pursuits which will cast a stumbling-block in their way; but be careful to maintain the public worship of God with those who are zealous in his cause. You profess to be redeemed, not only from the different veils of Heathenism, Mahometanism, Judaism, Popery, &c., but also from many of the absurdities existing among Protestant communities, and to be the most evangelical communion in the christian world. And shall it be told in Gath, or published in the streets of Askelon, that many of those whose errors you renounce are more moral than many who have (professedly) been baptized into the blessed Jesus, whose doctrine, precepts and worship are so holy, and whose disciples are designed to be so? Surely no! This ought not to be; but while you renounce your works of righteousness as a ground of your acceptance with God, you ought to be careful to maintain good works as a test of your love, and so walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

A point of order came up for discussion, in the form of a question by the church at Chester, to the effect—"Whether a gospel minister would be justified by the word of God, in the view of the members of this Association, in baptizing a person with whom he was satisfied as to his belief, &c., provided the church over which he was placed was not satisfied? The answer was—"Voted in the negative; except he were travelling remote from his particular charge, where no church is organized." You will observe that this is an *opinion* not a *decree*. Baptist churches sometimes ask *advice* of Associations, but they receive no *orders*.

When they met in Cornwallis, in 1815, the brethren were again cheered by the presence of American delegates. Isaac Case and Enoch Hunting, both of Massachusetts, attended the meeting, and it was agreed that the intercourse with Associations in the United States should be renewed. In the "Corresponding Letter there is a grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of God in restoring peace, coupled with a reference to evangelical activity that characterised the churches in the States. "Their zeal in the end," it is said, "will, we doubt not, give the American brethren a distinguished rank among the host of nations."

Joseph Dimock was Moderator, and preached the introductory sermon. Edward J. Reis was Clerk. The reports of the state of the churches was very disheartening, showing a decrease in numbers. But the missionary spirit was in the ascendant. After a sermon by Edward J. Reis a collection was made "for sending a missionary to the Eastward of Halifax," which amounted to £29 13s. 0d; and the brethren Joseph Crandal and James Munro were appointed to that service. It was also resolved, "That the Association is considered as a Missionary Society, and with them is left the whole management of the Mission business."

In compliance with a recommendation from the church at Chester it was "voted that the Baptist catechism should be procured, and recommended to the churches in connection, to be used by their members in the education of their children." This suggestion originated with Joseph Dimock. The subject of the Circular Letter, prepared by him, was the religious training of children. The duty of christian parents was clearly explained, and enforced with much affection, and earnestness. The following is an extract:—

"As to the time when to begin instruction,

it is not easy to fix, as some are capable of receiving instruction much sooner than others; but that religious instruction should mingle with the earliest and first impressions is clear; then our tears and prayers should be accompanied with reasonable information, exhortation and admonition. Lay before them the sinfulness and guilt of their state by nature, before a holy God—the penalty due to their sin—the remedy which is provided in the gospel, the atonement made for sins by the death of the Saviour. And instead of telling them that if they are good, learn their prayers and constantly repeat them like a good child of God, they shall go to heaven—we say, instead of this, tell them that they are sinners, and cannot think or do any good except it is given them from above—that nothing short of an application of the atoning blood of the Lamb slain on Calvary can ever prepare their souls for heaven. To trust our self-righteousness is natural to all ages and conditions of men; therefore it is much safer by the sword of God's Word to cut it off than to build it up, and to discover that the fruits of holiness and virtue spring from a purer root than grows in nature's garden, even from the grace of God in a renewed heart, which will produce the fruits of righteousness, and support them in immortal bloom in the midst of every rising storm. And as their capacities enlarge, endeavour to treasure up in their memory and understanding a system of truth, which, however ignorant of the spirituality of at the present, if ever they are brought by regenerating grace to a saving knowledge of the truth, will be an excellent means to balance their judgement with solid truths, when their zeal and love is flaming; it enables the understanding and affections to keep pace with each other, and may be a happy bulwark against error and delusion.

"The Baptist Catechism, we think, contains a brief summary of the christian religion, calculated to be an excellent help to parents and guardians in the instructing of children. We do not wish by this to supercede the scriptures, which are a perfect rule of faith and obedience, but by it to lead to a greater veneration for the scriptures; and a child of common capacity may soon commit it to memory. Many leisure hours might be appropriated to this work; but any one who would make any proficiency in this work must attend to it at stated times and pursue it conscientiously. That part of the Lord's day which is not taken up in public, family, or secret worship, might be taken up in imparting religious instruction to our children, together with other stated and occasional opportunities which might be the greatest use and the most lasting blessing. We would not wish for any one to be confined to a set form or stunted method of instructing; but make such remarks, explanations, and enlargements as may seem proper, in connexion with all other means;—and as the best of all, as soon as your children can read intelligibly, put the holy scriptures into their hands, especially such parts as are the most easy to understand, nor fear the terrible effect which some represent of the scripture being made so familiar to youths as to breed contempt. It was not the consequence of the blessed book's being put into the hands of Timothy, who, Paul says, had known them from a child; indeed, those fears appear to savor, more of popery than of christianity in its simplicity."

A committee was appointed "to draw up a code of discipline," with a view to its being "adopted and recommended to the churches in connection." The church at St. John had requested it. It is probable, however, that the brethren composing the committee shrunk from the task assigned them, for no report was presented, either then or at any subsequent meeting of the Association. It was obviously incompatible with the independence of the churches.

The meeting of the Association at Nictaux, in 1816, was of a less interesting character than usual. Joseph Crandal preached the introductory sermon; Joseph Dimock was Moderator; and James Munro, Clerk. The low state of religion, as indicated by the statistical returns, continued, the clear increase of the year being but two. Elders Case and Dexter attended as delegates from the Lincoln and Bowdoinham Associations.

It was resolved to continue home missionary operations, including in the field of la-

bour "the Northern shore of the Province of New Brunswick," and Joseph Crandal and James Munro were appointed missionaries. The moral destitution of the Eastern shore of Nova Scotia, as ascertained during the missionary tour of the preceding year, could not but affect the hearts of the brethren. Mr. Munro found persons who had not heard a sermon for upwards of thirty years, and many, nay "thousands to the Eastward," who had been "without the gospel ever since they were born." Edward Manning adduced these facts in the Circular Letter, and expatiated at much length on the zeal and liberality of the Baptists of the United States, mentioning several instances of munificent donations and legacies in that country for missionary objects, with a view to excite to more enlarged contributions and more extensive efforts.

"These examples," said the writer, "are very interesting, and deserve to be imitated. The calls for pecuniary aid are great and numerous. O let us come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

"God forbid that we should recommend any measure that would injure you or your dear families. No; but we think that people of property might retrench some of the luxuries and superfluities of life, and contribute towards sending the gospel to the poor, particularly the poor benighted heathen; and we think that those of the lower orders of society might by economising their time and property make a noble sacrifice of a small share of the good things of this life, and assist in sending the gospel, through the means of the missionaries, to their poor perishing fellow-creatures. We also take the liberty to suggest the idea that it is the duty, not only of the heads of families, but persons in single life, to be active in this good cause, and endeavour to forward it—nay, that common labourers, both male and female, might do something handsome for the promotion of the missionary interest."

"And we can assure you that we believe there will be a harvest of glory in the heavens at last, where millions converted to God through the instrumentality of missionaries sent out by the friends of God and man will meet with you and the host of their bountiful benefactors, and praise the Lord to eternity that he ever put it into the hearts of his children to form missionary societies, and to contribute of their worldly substance to send missionaries to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to their immortal souls, when really perishing for lack of knowledge. O what a delightful meeting that will be! Then, may it not be said, "the blessings of those that were ready to perish will come upon thee." Who will then regret their having given a shilling, a dollar, a guinea, a doubloon, or even a hundred dollars annually (if they were able) to wrest poor sinners from eternal woe and misery? O dear brethren, we think we can say that in this blessed cause 'God loves the cheerful giver; and if you cast your bread upon the waters you shall find it with an abundant increase, after many days, to the unspeakable joy of your own souls, and many others."

Only three Nova Scotia ministers, Messrs. Dimock, Ansley, and Munro, were present in 1817, when the Association met at Fredericton. The introductory sermon was preached by Joseph Dimock, who was also appointed Moderator; James Munro was Clerk. There had been another unfruitful year. Seventeen had been added to the church in Cornwallis, and sixteen to that of Halifax, but only fifteen to all the other churches in the Association, making a total of forty-eight, while the decrease was forty-nine.

The journals of the missionaries of the former year were read, and the brethren declared themselves "fully satisfied" with their exertions. David Harris was appointed missionary.

The Circular Letter, by T. H. Chipman, was unusually short. The writer's main object was to recommend a more numerous attendance at the meetings of the Association. The arguments were pertinent and forcible; but the monitor himself was among the absentees!

The meeting at Newport, in 1818, was cheered by good tidings. Thirty had been added at Onslow, and nineteen at St. John, while the church at Halifax reported an increase of one hundred and twenty! These